

Bureau of Land Management, Interior

§ 1610.5-7

limited to further refining or documenting a previously approved decision incorporated in the plan. Maintenance shall not result in expansion in the scope of resource uses or restrictions, or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved plan. Maintenance is not considered a plan amendment and shall not require the formal public involvement and interagency coordination process described under §§1610.2 and 1610.3 of this title or the preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. Maintenance shall be documented in plans and supporting records.

§ 1610.5-5 Amendment.

A resource management plan may be changed through amendment. An amendment shall be initiated by the need to consider monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, a change in circumstances or a proposed action that may result in a change in the scope of resource uses or a change in the terms, conditions and decisions of the approved plan. An amendment shall be made through an environmental assessment of the proposed change, or an environmental impact statement, if necessary, public involvement as prescribed in §1610.2 of this title, interagency coordination and consistency determination as prescribed in §1610.3 of this title and any other data or analysis that may be appropriate. In all cases, the effect of the amendment on the plan shall be evaluated. If the amendment is being considered in response to a specific proposal, the analysis required for the proposal and for the amendment may occur simultaneously.

(a) If the environmental assessment does not disclose significant impact, a finding of no significant impact may be made by the District Manager. The District Manager shall then make a recommendation on the amendment to the State Director for approval, and upon approval, the District Manager shall issue a public notice of the action taken on the amendment. If the amendment is approved, it may be implemented 30 days after such notice.

(b) If a decision is made to prepare an environmental impact statement, the

amending process shall follow the same procedure required for the preparation and approval of the plan, but consideration shall be limited to that portion of the plan being considered for amendment. If several plans are being amended simultaneously, a single environmental impact statement may be prepared to cover all amendments.

§ 1610.5-6 Revision.

A resource management plan shall be revised as necessary, based on monitoring and evaluation findings (§1610.4-9), new data, new or revised policy and changes in circumstances affecting the entire plan or major portions of the plan. Revisions shall comply with all of the requirements of these regulations for preparing and approving an original resource management plan.

§ 1610.5-7 Situations where action can be taken based on another agency's plan, or a land use analysis.

These regulations authorize the preparation of a resource management plan for whatever public land interests exist in a given land area. There are situations of mixed ownership where the public land estate is under non-Federal surface, or administration of the land is shared by the Bureau of Land Management with another Federal agency. The District and Area Manager may use the plans or the land use analysis of other agencies when split or shared estate conditions exist in any of the following situations:

(a) Another agency's plan (Federal, State, or local) may be used as a basis for an action only if it is comprehensive and has considered the public land interest involved in a way comparable to the manner in which it would have been considered in a resource management plan, including the opportunity for public participation.

(b) After evaluation and review, the Bureau of Land Management may adopt another agency's plan for continued use as a resource management plan if an agreement is reached between the Bureau of Land Management and the other agency to provide for maintenance and amendment of the plan, as necessary, to comply with law and policy applicable to public lands.

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(c) A land use analysis may be used to consider a coal lease when there is no Federal ownership interest in the surface or when coal resources are insufficient to justify plan preparation costs. The land use analysis process, as authorized by the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act, consists of an environmental assessment or impact statement, public participation as required by § 1610.2 of this title, the consultation and consistency determinations required by § 1610.3 of this title, the protest procedure prescribed by § 1610.5-2 of this title and a decision on the coal lease proposal. A land use analysis meets the planning requirements of section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The decision to approve the land use analysis and to lease coal is made by the Departmental official who has been delegated the authority to issue coal leases.

§ 1610.6 Management decision review by Congress.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act requires that any Bureau of Land Management management decision or action pursuant to a management decision which totally eliminates one or more principal or major uses for 2 or more years with respect to a tract of 100,000 acres or more, shall be reported by the Secretary to Congress before it can be implemented. This report shall not be required prior to approval of a resource management plan which, if fully or partially implemented, would result in such an elimination. The required report shall be submitted as the first action step in implementing that portion of a resource management plan which would require elimination of such a use.

§ 1610.7 Designation of areas.

§ 1610.7-1 Designation of areas unsuitable for surface mining.

(a)(1) The planning process is the chief process by which public land is reviewed to assess whether there are areas unsuitable for all or certain types of surface coal mining operations under section 522(b) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. The unsuitability criteria to be applied dur-

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ing the planning process are found in § 3461.1 of this title.

(2) When petitions to designate land unsuitable under section 522(c) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act are referred to the Bureau of Land Management for comment, the resource management plan, or plan amendment if available, shall be the basis for review.

(3) After a resource management plan or plan amendment is approved in which lands are assessed as unsuitable, the District Manager shall take all necessary steps to implement the results of the unsuitability review as it applies to all or certain types of coal mining.

(b)(1) The resource management planning process is the chief process by which public lands are reviewed for designation as unsuitable for entry or leasing for mining operations for minerals and materials other than coal under section 601 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

(2) When petitions to designate lands unsuitable under section 601 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act are received by the Bureau of Land Management, the resource management plan, if available, shall be the basis for determinations for designation.

(3) After a resource management plan or plan amendment in which lands are designated unsuitable is approved, the District Manager shall take all necessary steps to implement the results of the unsuitability review as it applies to minerals or materials other than coal.

§ 1610.7-2 Designation of areas of critical environmental concern.

Areas having potential for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) designation and protection management shall be identified and considered throughout the resource management planning process (see §§ 1610.4-1 through 1610.4-9).

(a) The inventory data shall be analyzed to determine whether there are areas containing resources, values, systems or processes or hazards eligible